

## WEST LAKE LANDFILL COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

**ACTION:** To communicate with stakeholders the EPA's response to the Missouri Attorney General's letter (expedited radiological testing, Federal authority over OU-1's radiological deposits, rapid construction of isolation barrier) and the ground water report

### **KEY MESSAGES:**

- [see separate document]

### **NEXT STEPS:**

1. Superfund and Regional Counsel prepare FAQ to use in media follow-up
2. [tbd]

### **TIMELINE:**

Thursday, March 20, 2014

- POTUS conducts interviews with St. Louis KSDK
- OPA monitors media coverage of POTUS

~~Thursday, March 20, 2014~~ OR Friday, March 21, 2014

- KB Green Light to move execute next steps
  - EPA response letter to AG delivered via email (Dana Peters)
  - EPA response letter to AG sent to congressional staff via email (LaTonya Sanders)
  - EPA response letter to AG sent to media (Chris Whitley)
  - ✓ ○ KB begins stakeholder calls (Dana confirm calls setup)
  - KB interviews with STL media (OPA to work on public radio interview):

Monday, March 24, 2014

- West Lake Update and Ground Water report posted and disseminated
  - WLU needs new lead story on AG response, GW report story drops into second news slot in place of USGS story (hold USGS for subsequent issue)
  - Posted and disseminated:

- Posted to Scribd and Webpage
- Emailed to Elected Officials
- Emailed to Media?

~Tuesday or Wednesday, March 25/26, 2014

- EPA response letter to Col. Hall and Col. Sexton via (Dana Peters)

Friday, March 28, 2014

**ACTION:** Briefing for Congressional Staff

**KEY DISCUSSION POINTS:**

WSJ story  
 AG letter to EPA and EPA response  
 Ground water report  
 Communication to public/community  
 Next public meeting

9:30 a.m. Internal Pre-Brief with R7 Team

10:30 a.m. Internal Pre-Brief with R7 Team and HQ's Staff

12:30 p.m. Briefing for Congressional Staff

1:30 p.m. Internal Post-Brief with R7 Team

## **West Lake Communications**

### **Key Messages:**

- EPA is leading a focused and coordinated effort to protect public health at West Lake
- Public drinking water supply is safe. Drinking water in the area is supplied by a Public Water Supply.
- Agree action is required to get an isolation barrier put in place as soon as possible.

### **Talking Points:**

- The EPA team has directed the construction of an isolation barrier to keep the two sites separate.
- The EPA team is leading actions at the site to protect public health.
- The EPA team continues its focused and coordinated efforts with state and federal partners.
- The community's frustration with the slow pace of activities is understandable;
  - It's important to emphasize the public drinking water supply is safe.
  - Furthermore, additional data shows no contamination from radiological material at offsite wells.
- EPA team will continue to spur actions that protect the community immediately and in the long term.
- EPA team is taking decisive action by compelling work at the West Lake Superfund site to:
  - Complete a protective long-term Superfund remedy at West Lake.
- EPA has the authority and responsibility to protect public health from the release of hazardous substances wherever they are, and we are committed to taking actions that compel effective management of the radiologically impacted material (RIM) resulting from the disposal of leached barium sulfate at the West Lake/Bridgeton site.
- We will protect the public regardless of where the material is located at the site.
- EPA is close to concluding an agreement with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to enlist Corps construction expertise for the isolation barrier to separate West Lake from the SSE.
- Both the EPA and USACE have a history of working together to decisively manage significant environmental projects.
- Col. Christopher Hall manages a top-notch staff and we are looking for ways to best leverage the considerable expertise of both agencies.
- While we are addressing immediate needs like the isolation barrier, we are also looking at long term solutions that will most effectively protect the people who live and work in the area.

### **Attorney General Letter Talking Points:**

- I valued the opportunity to speak with the Attorney General.

- We have a shared commitment to protect public health.
- The best path we have to make sure that happens is to build and sustain a close, professional federal-state partnership.
- The State of Missouri and the EPA have complementary regulatory authority that we exercise to hold the responsible parties to their duties.
- The State's lead in compelling the PRPs to control the subsurface smoldering event better enables this agency to compel the PRPs to isolate Bridgeton's SSE from West Lake.
- Coordination at the state and federal levels will best accomplish our mutual goal to keep the public protected from environmental contaminants.

#### **Underground Water Sampling Results Talking Points**

- The fourth round of groundwater sampling has been completed.
- EPA is seeing generally consistent results in well-to-well comparisons with the first three rounds. The Agency is also reviewing data from eight new deep bedrock wells at the southern portion of the site.
- These eight new wells were drilled by Republic following instructions from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to sample for benzene in the area adjacent to the Bridgeton Sanitary Landfill.
- The Potentially Responsible Parties subsequently conducted sampling for radionuclides and other analytes at the new wells.
- The results from the sampling are similar to the adjacent sightings. One well in the most recent round of sampling contained dissolved uranium much less than the uranium, but its total MCL was greater than 30 pCi/L.
- To date, total and/or dissolved radium were found in 30 of the 84 wells sampled at levels above EPA's recommended Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of five picocuries per liter (pCi/L). The results from one well helped EPA select actions that need to be taken at the site and will inform future direction for the management of the site.
- EPA is now scrutinizing these results with the groundwater experts at the United States Geological Survey (USGS) as the agencies evaluate all of the data.
- During these past several weeks, EPA Region 7's partnership with the USGS at the West Lake site has been building momentum. As new data from the fourth round of groundwater sampling has been added, the USGS is now positioned to provide the kind of science critical for EPA to make sound decisions on how best to protect the health of the public at the West Lake site.
- In addition to analyzing the groundwater data from the site, the USGS is also sampling off-site groundwater.
- As the key national experts on groundwater, geology, and hydrogeology, the USGS's partnership with EPA brings the best and the brightest scientists to the West Lake site team.

- The EPA Region 7 team is looking forward to the USGS completing their research so we can move our decision-making on future management of the site to the next level.

